

Svoboda top pick for county prosecutor; Spencer edged off list

By Brionna Friedrich

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After two last-minute nominations, Senior Deputy Prosecutor Katie Svoboda topped the list of three names that will be submitted for county prosecutor by the Grays Harbor Democrats. The only other candidate to express interest in the job before Thursday night's meeting, former prosecutor and Superior Court judge Mike Spencer, was knocked out of contention.

"I've just been overwhelmed by all the support by my friends in law enforcement and in the community," Svoboda said. "I'm excited to just get to work."

She didn't comment on the process the party used to create its list of three candidates to submit to the Grays Harbor County Commissioners to replace retired Prosecutor Stew Menefee.

"I've heard all the rumors, but I'm focused on me. I want to serve because I'm the best person for the job," she said.

In an initial vote to narrow the field to three candidates, Svoboda got 19 votes from about 20 precinct officers, followed by party Chairman George Smylie with 14, former party chairwoman Vini Samuel with 14 and Spencer with five.

Svoboda did note, "The appointment is a political process, and I think the party's statement tonight was clear."

"It's pretty much a joke. There are two people until tonight, who didn't even express an interest in the job," Spencer said Thursday. "This was just wired. I think it really just gives the party a black eye."

Smylie concluded by asking members, "If you know a commissioner, strongly suggest to them they quickly approve our No. 1 choice."